THE
VEDANTA KESARI

"LET THE LION OF VEDANTA ROAR."

VOL. XIV.

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THE VEDANTA KESARI

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."
"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold
The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman,"

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

VOLUME XIV] MAY 1927 [NUMBER 1

PRAYER.

ॐ

नम आत्मप्रदीपाय साक्षिणे परमात्मने।
नमो गिरां विदूराय मनसश्चेतसामपि ॥
नमः शान्ताय घोराय मूढाय गुणकर्मणे ।
निर्विशेषाय शान्ताय नमो ज्ञानघनायच ॥
नमो नमस्तेऽखिलकारणाय निष्कारणायाऽद्भुतकारणाय ।
सर्वागमाम्नाय महार्णवाय नमोऽपवर्गाय परायणाय ॥

Salutations unto the Lord Who is the Light of the soul, the Witness and the Supreme Spirit. Salutations unto Him who is beyond all speech, nay, even beyond the reach of the mind and the heart.

Salutations unto Him Who is ever peaceful, Who is terrific, Who is inscrutable, Who acts in accordance with principles, Who is without difference, Who is even-minded and who is intelligence personified.

Salutations unto Thee Who art the Cause of all, Who art Thyself causeless, Who art the wonderful Origin of the whole creation, Who art the goal of all scriptures, the Mighty Ocean of Existence, the Bestower of emancipation and the Great Refuge of all creatures.

SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM—VIII, 3.

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

(*At the Belur Math*)

WHEN once you get established in meditation, you will come to know how sweet is the resulting bliss. Days and nights pass away unnoticed. You feel that you are floating in an ocean of infinite bliss. Don't speak about your experiences to everybody, least of all to those of a contrary nature. It may do harm to your growth. But if you exchange your experiences with one of a like nature with yours and in harmony with your temperament, you may be helped in your progress. Both of you are travellers on the same path. Perhaps your companion has already walked along it and is aware of its dangers and difficulties. Benifited by his experiences, you might be able to avoid those dangers and difficulties.

Do you know the object of *satsanga* (company of holy men)? The experiences of holy men are a great help to a Sadhaka. If you visit a new place and have the help of a good guide, you will be able to see within a short time all that is worth seeing there; also you will be saved from all the dangers and difficulties into which strangers are likely to fall. In a similar way, from the company of advanced Sadhakas, you will be able to gather many valuable hints, and your spiritual struggle will be very much simplified The intelligence of an ordinary man does not go very far. Life is short. And many things have to be done. So you must find out the best way of doing your work within as short a time as possible. Hence the need of holy company.

This life may come to an end after some years or even to-day, and nobody knows when the end will come. It is better to get equipped for the journey as soon as

possible. Your going empty-handed to a strange and unknown place would mean much suffering and sorrow. Birth must inevitably lead to death. Death means going to an unknown place. Somehow or other you should get yourself fully provided for this journey. Finish all your duties here and be ever ready for the great *call*. If you do that you will be able to depart from this world with a smiling face. * * * * * When you have finished all your work, there is no fear for you. Then you know that you are well provided for the journey.

You have seen that children, while gyrating round a pillar keep a very firm hold of it. You too should by all means hold firmly the Pillar of life (God). Have faith in yourself. Believe, 'I am a man, I can do anything.' With such a strong faith in yourself forge ahead and you will attain to your life's goal and be blessed for ever.

Fear is the greatest sin. Banish all fear and weakness from your mind. When the desire to realise God is alive in you, and when fortunately you have got opportunities to lead a spiritual life, put forth all your might and get a taste of the Supreme Bliss. The cycle of births and deaths is full of misery. Make the best use of your present life. Get yourself free from this cycle, and become the eternal companion of the Lord.

Unless you can fix your mind on God, you will find it very difficult to keep yourself pure in this world. Mahamaya (The Divine Mother) sports in diverse ways, and it is no joke to withstand the innumerable temptations created by her. Lust, anger, greed etc. are almost invincible, and to conquer them is no child's play. Through the strength of the Lord alone, and not by any other means, can you cut the meshes of Maya and make yourself free.

Therefore I urge you to become strong with the might of the Lord. Then you can pass the rest of your life as he wills and directs. It is not given to ordinary

mortals to know God through their own exertion. They alone can understand Him, to whom out of His infinite grace he reveals Himself. Only such fortunate persons become free from the net of Samsara and obtain pure devotion and liberation.

You must have a routine for spiritual practices. *Nishtha* (steadfastness) is a very important factor, without which no great achievement is possible. Steadfastness must be of such a nature that, wherever and under whatever circumstances you may be, the rules that you have laid down for yourself, must be observed at any cost. For your meditation, your study, your reflection, your sleep etc., you must have certain definite hours. If you lead an irregular life, you cannot succeed in anything. Whether it is physical or mental development, the only way to attain it is to lead a strictly regular life. If a clock goes out of order, the watch-repairer sets it right, and then it continues to keep correct time. So with the mind of man. It has become irregular owing to various reasons. By keeping company with good men, you must get your mind set properly. If you try to mould your life according to instructions of holy men, you may easily avoid the pitfalls and temptations of life. Following in their footsteps you too will reach the same goal attained by them and fulfil your life's purpose.

So long as your mind is not controlled there is a great need for you to observe certain definite rules. Without them you can never get mastery over your mind.

The natural tendency of the mind is to shirk work, but when you have made a routine you must tell your mind, "You are subject to this rule now; whether you like it or not, you must observe it." In this way, you should try to bring the mind under control. When you have succeeded in this, you need not observe any more rules. They will fall off of their own accord.

Life is fast flowing away like a stream. The day that is gone cannot be recalled. So make the best use of your time. Crying 'alas!' at the last moment will be of no avail. Be therefore up and doing. Make up your mind to realise your goal or die in the attempt. Death is certain. It may come to-day or to-morrow. If you lose your life in trying to attain God, it is no loss but a positive gain.

Try to fix your mind on the Lord and firmly resolve, "Him I must realise." What happiness is there in this world! It is all nothing but sorrow and misery. Treat it as worthless. You must go beyond all sorrow and misery. If you get a glimpse of God, you will have infinite Bliss, and sensuous pleasures will lose all charm for you. When you have once come to the Lord, there is no room for fear or anxiety. Give up all things of the world and dwell on Him and Him alone.

EDITORIAL NOTES

OUR NEW YEAR

With the current issue, the Vedanta Kesari steps on the threshold of the fourteenth year of its life. And on this auspicious ushering in of the new year we offer our reverential salutations to the Benign Providence whose unfailing grace has sustained us in the midst of them any difficulties through which we have had to pass. We also convey our hearty greetings to all our readers and friends whose unstinted support enabled us to render our humble service to the cause of the Vedanta. The success so far achieved makes us hope for a better prospect in the immediate future. Our object is not to establish a sect or a creed. We stand for the eternal verities of the Vedanta, and on these we want to build up a world-wide spiritual brotherhood whose foundations have been well and truly laid by Sri Ramakrishna and his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda. Through the will of the Lord, the message of the Vedanta is spreading far and wide. Earnest seekers after the Truth are responding to its call in an ever-increasing number. And with the expansion of its spiritual kingdom the task of its humble workers is also growing heavier. It has been our proud privilege

to receive valuable help from many a quarter, expected and unexpected. But the cause of the Vedanta is a cause universal, and as such the demand on our service is steadily on the increase. To cope successfully with the growing work, we need the hearty co-operation of all our sisters and brothers who have come to look upon the Vedanta and the *Vedanta Kesari* as their own. May the Lord bless us all to follow the path of service that has been ours with renewed strength and devotion !

THE MENACE OF WESTERN MILITARISM

The whole world is passing through a tremendous unrest that is assuming greater and greater proportions with the flow of time. Class strifes, communal dissensions, international discords are troubling to the utmost the soul of humanity. Apart from the vast economic and cultural contests manifesting themselves everywhere, the world wide conflict between the conquering white race and the subjected "coloured" race has banished peace from the face of the earth. Besides, the evil spirit of aggression and exploitation, that reigns supreme in the hearts of the competing nations of the West, is urging them on to multiply engines of destruction on a gigantic scale. Almost all the Western nations are secretly preparing themselves for a terrible world-war that is sure to throw into insignificance the last Great War out of the horrors of which mankind has scarcely recovered itself. There is a mad rush among the so called Great Powers for increasing their military, naval and aerial resources. Countries that proclaim with a loud voice the ideals of liberty and equality are developing a most virulent form of militarism which threatens their very existence as nations. Besides, they have become a source of great danger to all the "coloured" races of the world. As an American divine has said very poignantly, "There is no 'yellow peril'. There is no 'Brown peril'. There is no 'Black peril'. There is only one peril, and that is the 'White peril,' and singularly enough the white race is the only race that claims to follow the Prince of Peace."

AWAKENING OF ASIA

Nations, like individuals, have their periods of activity and periods of rest. After a strenuous life covering many centuries, the Asiatic races went to sleep. When they awoke they found that a strange people from the West had invaded their lands, and were trying to bring about not only the political and economic but cultural enslavement as well. The glamour of the civilisation of these conquerors possessing intense energy, wonderful mastery over nature and mighty power of organisation, so

captivated the minds of the still drowsy Orientals that they began to pay them a blind worship. But with the dawn of the normal consciousness there followed the great disillusionment. The peace-loving Asiatics—the poor victims of unprovoked aggression—came to discover that the Western invaders were fighting nations who had converted their religion into a fighting religion, using their religious preachers as instruments of furthering their material conquest. First came the clergy, then the trader, then the gun-boat and then the conquest—this has been the invariable order in which many a "heathen" land was subjugated. The Asiatics came to realise through their great sufferings the evils of Western Civilisation, and it is no wonder that they began to question seriously its vaunted superiority. But the severest blow to Western prestige came from the Great War that laid bare the dark spots of Occidental Civilisation,—the abominable propaganda of lies deliberate dishonesty of Governments, wild hatred of the enemy and reckless destruction of human life. As a result, senseless admiration has given place to a general dislike for everything Western. At the same time the Asiatic nations have become more alive than before to the importance of their rich heritage, and are anxious to protect it by all means from foreign aggression.

THE GREAT STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

The soul of Asia has awakened, and no power on earth can keep her in slavery any more. Everywhere there is an yearning for a new order, and the one thought common to the Asiatic nations is how to free themselves from alien domination. To attain this end Japan has gone so far as to assimilate Western militarism and it was after she had "learned to kill," that she came to be accepted as a "civilised" nation. Turkey too had to meet brute force by brute force in order to regain her status as an independent nation. The Christian missionaries have been proclaiming to the Asiatics—"Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." But unfortunate China found to her great cost that to be meek and remain meek is the surest way to "the disinheritance of the earth." So at last the meek Chinese, on whom were forced missionaries and opium at the point of the bayonet, have taken recourse to arms, A great Chinaman has remarked with a deep pathos—"No Oriental nation can have the respect of the Christian nations of the West unless it is armed. There is nothing then for us but to arm. We must go contrary to the traditions of our people and to the percepts of the greatest of our sages in order to secure justice at the hands of the nations of the West." Militarism is breeding militarism

everywhere. If all the peoples of Asia, Africa and other lands under foreign exploitation, take up arms against their aggressors, the whole world will be converted into a vast military camp. And with all the dreadful weapons of destruction invented by the Western brain, mankind will be heading fast for Armageddon. Is there really no way out from this cosmic catastrophe ?—this is the most vital question that should occupy the minds of the thoughtful men and women of all countries.

WEST TURNING TO THE EAST

While statesmen and diplomats, who hold in their hands the destinies of nations, are engaged in maintaining an armed peace and are preparing for another devastating war, the teeming millions of all countries in the East and the West are tired of militarism and are sincerely hankering for permanent peace. As Mr. Bertrand Russel points out, even in imperialistic Great Britain "a large proportion of those who fought in the Great War are determined never to fight again, whatever the issue." There is a steadily growing discontent in the minds of men and women in the West against their militaristic civilisation that puts too great an emphasis on externals. "In India and China," frankly acknowledges a Western thinker, "the stress is different, the rhythm is strange to us, and our senses, deafened and deadened by the Clamour and poisons of our civilisation, are not attuned to those harmonies." There is a growing appreciation of the East. Nay, many have lost their faith in Christianity for its utter failure in putting an end to war and are now turning to the East for a new light. "Now, since the war has revealed," observes an American writer, "the pitiable bankruptcy of Western ecclesiasticism as a saving force, the Occident is more than ever receptive to spiritual influences from Asia—the venerable mother of religions ; the world itself may find renewal of youth in the waters of these life-giving springs which have been flowing through the ages from the slopes of the Himalayas."

INDIA'S CONTROL OF MILITARISM

Of all the countries in Asia, it is to India that many in the West are looking up for a saving message. "Knowledge of the Vedas," says an Occidental writer, "might be of importance to us in this restless age. From them we might gain fresh light on the secrets of poise and peace." Indeed, India has never been a conquering nation in the political sense. And those of her children who spread her spiritual message in foreign lands never made their religion subserve any material end. There

must be something in the ancient religion of this land that has all along succeeded in keeping militarism under its full control and in establishing a relation of love with the neighbouring countries. Hinduism might have overdone its work of taming the brute, but there is no doubt that it possesses the surest cure for megalomania that has bred violence and aggression in the heart of the West. Like a potent medicine which cures a disease but brings about some morbid condition in the patient through its immoderate use, the highest ideals of Hinduism as represented in the Vedanta and Buddhism have removed from the nature of its votaries the poisons of ferocity and aggression, but have by its misapplication tended to make them too mild and passive. But the defect lies not in the religion but in its indiscriminate application to individuals and communities. Maddened with the wine of imperialism, the nations of the West may fail to recognise the great transforming power of the religion of a subject race. But instances of conquering the conqueror are not rare in the history of the human race. Greece conquered her victor Rome by the mighty influence of her culture. India herself witnessed a similar phenomenon, times without number. Hinduism completely assimilated all the invading hordes that overran the land from time to time before the Muhammedan conquest of the country. And history seems to be repeating itself now on a somewhat different but grander scale than before.

THE INFLUENCE OF VEDANTA

The universal ideals of Hinduism are fast spreading in many a Western land, and are converting thousands of men and women into its staunch adherents. The author of "Christian Thought and Hindu Philosophy" is not to be blamed if he "is amazed to find the extent to which Hindu Pantheism has already begun to permeate the religious conceptions of America and even England." But this is not the first time in human history that the Vedantic thoughts are influencing other religions and their votaries. The achievements of the Vedanta Philosophy in this direction is by no means small. It gave birth in the post-Vedic age to Buddhism—the first missionary religion of the world.

It influenced some of the early Christian schools including the Gnostics as well as many systems of Western philosophy, ancient and medieval. It also had its effect on Islam. "Does not Sufism," asks Prof. S. Khuda Buksh, "owe its origin mainly to the school of Indian Philosophy known as the Vedanta School?" Nor is this all. Vedantic thoughts have inspired many of the modern Europeans, poets, philosophers and writers. Consciously or uncon-

sciously Vedanta is fertilising the Western mind. In the words of Sir John Woodroffe, " India, true to its principles (in this matter different from those which have prevailed in the West) will never force itself by violence on any. It asks only a fair hearing, having trust that the truths, of which it believes itself to be the guardian, will of their own strength establish themselves. Truth, in whatever form, needs nothing but itself to win the minds and hearts of men. And so we see once more Indian ideas (without material aid such as that possessed by Christian Missions) commencing to influence the world thus rousing to strengthened combat all those who from racial. political, and religious motives are opposed to them." In spite of all oppositions Vedantic ideas are gaining ground both in India and in the West, and are bringing solace and hope to thousands of men and women who have found it impossible to subscribe to narrow creeds and dogmas passing under the name of religion.

THE MISSION OF VEDANTA

The demon of aggression has brought a terrible political and economic strife into the world. And this together with the great conflict of culture that is going on everywhere has divided mankind into numerous separate communities constantly warring with one another. Religions that support aggression and strife speak of a brotherhood possible only within their respective folds and through the acceptance of their respective prophets and doctrines have no chance of effecting the union of all sections of humanity who are apt to follow not one but different teachers and doctrines. The hope of the future lies in the religion which with its all-embracing ideals is capable of satisfying the highest spiritual aspirations of men and women and help them to live in peace and amity. The Vedanta possesses the great virtue of meeting this demand for a new order of things, and has already begun its work in this direction. Its noble doctrine of the potential divinity of man is creating a respect for human life as such, and is thereby spiritualising the relationship between man and man,—a thing which creedal religions have utterly failed to do. Its message of Unity in diversity possesses as expressed by many scholars and philosophers of the West, " a great ethical value in cementing the ties of friendship and brotherhood between distant peoples " that are in reality inseparable parts of the One Cosmic Being, " who with hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads and mouths everywhere, with ears everywhere— pervades the whole universe." Its spirit of universalism, which accepts all religions as different paths leading to the same Truth, is

slowly and silently promotirg the spirit of fellowship among the followers of the various religions of the world. No wonder that after coming in touch with the current of religous life in India a great American missionary observed—"The Christianity of the future is going to be enriched and enlarged from what we may learn from the Orient." Observes another—"This System (Vedanta) is not to be regarded as a mere curiosity, as a speculative vagary... ..The reality of the One is the truth which the East may well teach us."

INDIA AND WORLD-PEACE

A great cultural synthesis is going on all over the world. Instead of slavishly imitating things western, the Indians are now trying to preserve and realise the essentials of their civilisation and to assimilate at the same time the best in the culture of others. In Europe and America, the thoughtless disregard for Hindu culture has yielded place to an intelligent appreciation of India's spiritual greatness. The Westerners are making all efforts to propagate their scientific culture in India. It is now incumbent on the sons of India to preach to the West the marvellous spiritual culture of their motherland. India's spiritual culture must transform world-civilisation and bring in a new age of perfect harmony.

It was to carry on this great spiritual mission of India that Swami Vivekananda repeatedly urged chis ountrymen—"Materialism and all its miseries can never be conquered by materialism. Armies when they attempt to conquer armies only multiply and make brutes of humanity. Spirituality must conquer the West. To give and take is the law of nature. We also must follow that law...They (The Westerners) have been for a long time giving you of what wealth they possess and now is the time for you to share your priceless treasure with them. And you will see how their feelings of hatred will be quickly replaced by those of faith, devotion and reverence towards you, and how they will do good to your country even unasked." May the noble message of the Rishis of India permeate the East and West and bring into existence a new civilisation with spirituality as its dominating note! And may it tend to establish a better understanding, and with it permanent peace and harmony on earth!

स्वस्ति प्रजाभ्यः परिपालयन्तां न्याय्येन मार्गेण महीं महीशाः ।
गोब्राह्मणेभ्यः शुभमस्तु नित्यं लोकास्समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु ॥

May God betide all people! May the sovereigns rule the earth, following the righteous path! May prosperity ever reign over the land for the benefit of all creatures! And may all worlds prosper in peace and plenty! Om Shantih! Shantih!! Shantih!!!

NEED OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

By Swami Atulananda

It is sometimes thought that obedience to ethical laws, practice of religious injunctions, external worship and the like belong to the lowest stage of spiritual life.

We live in an age of intellectuality, and everything in life, even our religious conception, is subjected to the test of the intellect. What the intellect cannot grasp and explain, is forthwith put aside as useless, as fit only for the ignorant and superstitious. Intellect rules supreme, it is like a brandishing sword threatening to cut asunder the simple faith that hitherto has worked such miracles in the field of religion and spiritual life.

The religious aspirant now-a-days seem to be satisfied with an intellectual grasp of his subject. He wants to understand religion, he wants to explain to himself and others the subtle questions regarding existence, nature, man and God. Religious life is gradually turned into an intellectual life, pure and simple.

We have been fed with the highest intellectual conceptions of life, with the loftiest explanations of the verities of Existence to such an extent that we have become theoretical philosophers, considering ourselves superior to the simple-hearted, but thoroughly sincere devotee of the past.

This spirit of the age has dealt severe blows to the practical side of religion. We live on theories, disdaining the simple as well as the more severe practices of religion. These practices are for the simple, we think, for the common folk who cannot soar with us to the highest pinnacle of philosophic understanding.

The result is, that our life has become devoid of the desire to *live* our philosophy, to make life the test of our belief, to aspire to the practice and realisation of religion. And under the mask of spiritual freedom, sometimes the grossest license is practised. The intellect is satisfied, and the heart no longer yearns for God-realisation, for the deep and blissful feeling experienced by the devotee. Our religion has become a skeleton, a corpse, on which we place the flowers of intellectual attainment.

But intellectual understanding alone cannot satisfy the heart. We cannot live by intellect alone. The heart, the seat of our feelings and emotions, is closer to us than our intellect. When the heart is not satisfied man is unhappy. And the intellect cannot bring peace to the heart.

Where is our philosophy, when circumstances over which we have no control throw us into an abyss of despair ? Where is our reason when death robs us of our most beloved ? We argue, we try to convince ourselves that disease and pain and suffering are only transitory, that we are the Spirit beyond all suffering, that there is no death for the soul, but let us be sincere—in how many cases does this intellectual balm heal the wounds of our aching heart ? In very few, indeed !

The reason is near at hand. It is because our reasoning is not based on actual experience. Our words are hollow, meaningless and lifeless, for they flow from a source devoid of substance. The shallow pool of intellect cannot quench the burning fire of sorrow. It is heart alone that can speak to heart, feeling alone can bring comfort to the sorrowing heart. And real feeling is the outcome of experience. Unless we have experienced the full meaning of our words we cannot convey that meaning to others, we cannot relieve the sorrow of others. And the ache of our own heart is not cured by our philosophical formulas.

Religion, the highest of all sciences, the practical philosophy of life, is entirely a question of realisation, of actual experience. Unless it be that it can never be a practical guidance and comfort in our lives, here or hereafter.

Religion, to have any real value, must be practical, it must lend itself to be carried out under all conditions of life. And only to those who make it practical will religion yield its fruit. Talk cannot satisfy. We must practise religion to experience the peace of mind for which we are all seeking, and which religion holds out to us.

It has been said, many ages ago, that truth is not revealed to him who only discusses about truth.

In the Chhandogya Upanishad, after laying down the rules of a religious life, the Rishi exclaims, "He who behaves thus, all his life, reaches the world of Brahman. He is free, he does not return to this world. Yea, he does not return." Our only safe course lies therefore in keeping to the rules laid down by spiritual men, by men " Who are versed in the scriptures, who are themselves without taint, who are free from worldly desires, who are the knowers of Brahman."

It is, of course, much easier to talk about religion than it is to practise it. Read some books on the Vedanta philosophy, and you will have an intellectual understanding of what religion means. It will give you intellectual satisfaction, and you may be able to hold your own in philosophical discussions. This in itself is good. But the danger lies here, that this intellectual satisfaction stands in the way of a deeper yearning of the heart to taste *that* of which philosophy only speaks. Sri Ramakrishna used to illustrate this state of mind with a story. Two men went to a mango orchard. One of the men made a thorough study of the orchard. When he left the orchard he knew how the trees were planted, how high they grew how many fruits each tree should bear, and he could give a minute description of the size, shape and colour of the fruit. But he was so busy with his study that he forgot to taste the fruit. He went home and wrote a long and learned treatise on mango culture. The other man was of a simple turn of mind. He did not care for the investigations of his friend He climbed a tree and ate the fruit. When he left the orchard he knew only one thing, namely, that the mango was the most delicious fruit he had ever tasted.

Here we see the difference between the practical man and the theoretical man. Thus it is in religion. A man may be able to give learned discourses on religion and still have never tasted the sweet peace and contentment that arises from communion with God· Another may not be able to explain any of the mysteries of the spiritual life, but having tasted the fruit of religion lives in perfect peace. "If thou didst know the whole Bible by heart," says Thomas a Kempis, "and the sayings of all the philosophers, what would it all profit thee without the love of God and His grace? *Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity,* besides loving God and serving Him alone." And in the Upanishads we read, "He who thinks that he knows Brahman well, does not know It. But It is known to him who thinks that he does not know It." He who has realised the truth knows that the intellect cannot know God. God is beyond the intellect, but He is very close to the loving heart. "This Atman is not to be attained by the study of the Vedas alone nor by the intellect, nor by learning. He can be attained only by him who sincerely seeks to know Him. To him the Atman reveals Its true nature."

Practice alone can lift us to that higher sphere where we can reach out and take possession of truth, where truth becomes our own, "Even as the fruit is our own when we hold it in our hand."

God must be seen, the sages tell us, He must be perceived, we must taste the sweetness of His presence. Then we can say that we experience religion. And that comes only after faithful practice.

About what the practices are, and what is meant by living the religious life, the scriptures do not leave us in the dark. They point out, step by step, the path that the religious aspirant must tread. All scriptures are uniform in their declarations that truthfulness, chastity, control of mind, meditation, love towards God and unselfishness must be practised to attain spiritual realisation. Without the practice of these, no progress can be made. And, says the Katha Upanishad, " No one who has not abandoned sin and bad conduct can know God."

But as regards the special form our religious exercises shall take the Vedanta is the most liberal. Practise whatever best suits you, whatever is most congenial to your temperament. In the 12th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, for example, Sri Krishna points out the different forms our practices may take. " Follow this path or that, " he says, "it matters not. So long as you practise any of the methods you are dear to me, and I shall liberate you from sin."

We are not all constituted alike, we differ widely in our temperamental make-up, so there must be wide margins between which we can move freely. Let our practice be through the performance of our daily duties as a worship to God, or let us perform special acts of devotion, it matters not what they are so long as the heart really thirsts for God. And the more intense and sincere our practice is, the sooner the goal will be reached.

From this we see that we should never be proud and think that our practice is the highest and all other practices are inferior. Our own practice may be the best for us. But let us never forget that other practices are just as efficacious if carried out in the right spirit.

And here it may be well to call your attention to a mistake that is often made. We are all apt to think that the highest practices are suitable to us. We disdain the difficult routine of starting at the beginning, and at once we take the stand of the Jnani, of him who follows the path of wisdom, where everything is regarded as a dream and God in His absolute aspect is worshipped. It is but natural for human nature to aspire for the highest. And it is but natural for a human being to think that he, if no one else, is fit for the highest,

It is here that the danger lies. We all want to practise the highest. But are we fit for it ? Do we understand the real meaning of these highest practices ? The highest stand the Yogi can take is to identify himself with God. But can *we* do that? Can we say with the strength of conviction, "Yes, I am God" ? Do we know what God is ? If not, how can we say in all sincerity that we are God?

What does it involve? To the perfect Yogi the body is of no consequence, He knows that he is the Atmân and not the body. He has realised It. Pleasure and pain, heat and cold, health and disease, are all mental or physical conditions. And the Yogi disregarding the claims of body and mind, does not heed these conditions. He always lives in the realm of the spirit, whether the body lives or dies is indifferent to him.

Is it so with us ? If so, then we are Jnanis. If not, to say "I am Cod," has no meaning and will not lead us higher unless with the words we join the acts, unless we really try to live up to this truth. Then no complaint should ever fall from our lips. We should remain unmoved under all conditions, always happy in the thought that we are the Atman.

This is, certainly, a most exalted state, it is freedom even in this life. But before we take this highest stand it may be well to consider if we are fit for it. Do we not require to practise a good deal before we can say that we are beyond the ordinary practices?

How did the Yogis become perfect? By simply saying, "I am the Atman" ? Certainly not. Read the lives of these godly men and you will find that only after long years of the greatest austerities, after days and nights of deep meditation, after fulfilling the laws of Yoga in every respect, did they become perfect Jnanis.

(To be concluded.)

THE DOCTRINE OF EXPERIENCE AS THE ONE SELF

By Prof. K. Sundararama Aiyar, M. A.

VIII MAYA (OR AJNANA)

The modern Pragmatic school of thinkers deny and even ridicule the metaphysical distinction between Experience as transcendental and experience as a phenomenon. For instance Mr. Dewey, the leader of the school in the United States, has recently expressed his opinion that, when philosophers have, as the result of reflection, alighted upon a distinction between what is stable and good in quality, they withdraw it from the sphere of practical pursuit and choice, and elevate it into an "asylum for contemplation or a theme for dialectical elaboration, instead of an ideal to inspire and guide conduct." He holds, further, that "the contents and the form of ultimate absolute experience are derived from and based upon the features of actual experience, the very experience which is then relegated to unreality by the supreme reality derived from unreality." This explanation (or conjecture) is, or may be, true of such *mere speculation* as forms the basis of Western metaphysics from Democritus and Plato down to Kant and Hegel. But, as already frequently pointed out, the Indian Vedantin does not base his doctrine of Reality on mere speculative analysis and reasoning, but on the logical co-ordination and synthesis of the statements found in the eternal and divine revelation of the Veda as the one source of truth.

Mr. Dewey says rightly:—" Not safely can an '*ism*' be made out of experience. For, any interpretation of experience must perforce simplify; simplifications tend in a particular direction; and the direction may be set by custom which one assumes to be natural simply because it is traditionally congenial. For at least two hundred years many interests, religious, industrial, political, have centred about the status of the individual. Hence the drift in all the systems save the classic traditional school has been to think in ways that make individuality something isolated and central. When the notion of experiences is introduced, who is not familiar with the query, uttered with a crushingly triumphant tone,—'Whose experience'? The implication that experience is not only always somebody's, but that the pecu-

liar nature of somebody infects experience so pervasively that experience is *merely* somebody's and hence of nobody and nothing else." We have quoted this long passage to show how narrow, inadequate, and therefore vulnerable is both the matter and method of Western thought,—how its problems and pronouncements in spite of its noisy and proud pretension to have as their support the precise content of the experience of individuals, are *avowedly* based on mere "interests"—and, when they are not so based, on what Mr. Dewey explains as "that which is close at hand", and describes as "experience in its gross and macroscopic straits,"—*i. e.*, not only the empirical data which goes by the name of science, but anything else we can think of, whether magic, myth, mystery, reverie, imagination, ignorance, abnormality, insanity, disease, and what not, if only the phenomena find their entrance into a thinker's mental equipment and are utilised by him as the materials on which to expend his powers of analysis and reasoning so as to build up his system of doctrine.

The Indian mind can never find rest—or even food for meditation—in what Mr. Dewey recognises as experience only "denotatively found"; nor is its method of reasoned and fruitful synthesis to be wasted upon such unpromising materials as form the "natural" phenomena from whose investigation and analysis the Western thinker hopes to construct the "supernatural" world of metaphysical reality which is to bring peace and satisfaction to the philosophic mind of every inquirer after eternity. As already frequently explained (under previous headings) the Vedantin builds his doctrine of reality on the divine revelation of the Veda. He also resolves to practise the methods taught therein in order to perfect his higher nature so as to realise the perfect truth and joy which is to make him for ever free from the bondage of phenomenal experiences.

Like all other schools of Indian religion and thought, the Vedanta holds that *samsara*—the cause of births and deaths in the phenomenal universe—is a burden, and brings misery to the *Jiva*, but differs from them in ascribing its origin to *Ajnana*,—the phenomenal ignorance of the true nature of the One Self (or Absolute Reality). Now, what is the nature of *Ajnana*?

This *Ajnana* is also otherwise known as Maya. A good deal of obloquy and denunciation has been directed against the Advaitin as being a Mayavadin. But, in truth Maya is only a synonym for *Prakriti* (primordial matter). The Svetasvatara Upanishad

says :—"Know Maya to be the same as Prakriti." And Sankara also says in his bhashya on Sutra I. 4, 3,—"That causal potentiality of the world is of the nature of ignorance (*avidya*); it is denoted by the term *avyakta* (undeveloped); this *avyakta* is in, some places denoted by the term *akasa*; in some places it is denoted by the term *akshara*; in some places it is spoken of as Maya."

The Vedanta holds that there are three kinds of existence: (1) *Paramartha*, the one absolute reality, which is always the same, —never subject to any change of form from any limitations of time, place, or action from any other similar or dissimilar thing. (2) *Vyavahara*, the world of phenomena, external and internal, which we know through the medium of the intellect or the senses.(3)*Pratibhasa* apparent existence like what we see in the state of dream, or a pure mirage and fabrication of the mind like the silver superposed on a mother-of-pearl which, from mere mistake of observation, we do not perceive truly.

Ajnana or *Maya*, (*Nature* in its undeveloped and unmanifested state) belongs to the second of these three classes—and hence also all the *material* phenomena forming the universe. (a) It is not a mere non-entity (*Sunya*) like the horn of a hare, but *bhava-rupa*, positive in nature. Because it is a positive but changing, evolving form of existence, it is not a noumenal (or absolute) and permanent reality and is liable to be stultified, as we know it has been in the case of all liberated souls, past and present whether referred to or not, in the Veda and the allied sacred literature in India. (b) It is not *niramsa* (without parts)—for then, it would not be capable of evolution. Nor is it possessed of parts (*samsa*), for that would imply that it can be destroyed by an adequate application of physical force, and so cannot be the original (though only *proximate*) material cause of the manifested universe. (c) It cannot exist apart from Atman; nor can it remain in inseparable association with it—as its essential characteristics, viz, *anrita*, *jada*, and *duhkha*, are the very reverse of those of the Atman, viz. *Satyam*, *Jnana*, and *Ananda*. Further, if such inseparable association existed between the two, it will have to follow that, when Maya is stultified its associate too,—viz, the Atman—will get stultified;—and that is impossible and absurd, as the Atman is, by the Veda, defined as the one *permanent* reality which is the indispensable condition rendering possible the manifestation of the universe of phenomena.—For all these reasons, Maya is called *anirvachaniya*—a phenomenon inexplicable in its origin and nature. The *Vasistha Sara* puts the nature of Maya in

a nutshell:—"This Maya, Oh Rama ! is of this nature, viz., (1) its essence *(svabhava)* cannot be clearly perceived ; (2) it gives joy by its self-stultification *(svanasa)*; (3) it disappears when it is truly (and fully) comprehended in its essence and actuality."

The above doctrine concerning Maya (Nature or primordial matter) is strongly condemned and denounced by various Indian schools of thought. But the Advaitin maintains his position by a powerful battery of arguments. Among Indian thinkers, there are two views in regard to the origin of phenomena. Some hold that every phenomenon arises from a *previous non-existence* (*prag-abhava*). These thinkers form the school known as *Asat-Karya-Vada* (the doctrine of the origination of effects without a previously existing cause). Others hold that all effects (in the phenomenal world) exist previously, though in a different form known as the cause. *Ex nihilo nihil fit.* These hold the doctrine known as *Sat-Karya-Vada.* The Advaitins take their place among the *latter.* Hence, *avidya* (or Maya), being accepted as the cause of bondage, is *positive* in nature,—not a *non-entity* or mere negation.

The following *further* arguments are advanced in confirmation. *First*, it is supported by universal experience,—*i. e.*, by what is known as *pratyaksha-pramana.* Every one says,—*Ahamajanah*—"I do not know the Brahman." The Nyaya school of thinkers, hold that this ignorance (of Brahman) is a mere ordinary (samanya) negation (*abhava*)—*i. e.*, we negate the existence of Brahman just as we negate a pot when it is absent on the floor in front of us (even though it may exist elsewhere). This view is entirely erroneous. Every ordinary case of negation implies the existence of *pratiyogi*, *i. e.*, the object (negatived) somewhere,—*i. e.*, the absence of the perception of) a pot on the floor implies the existence of the same elsewhere. But, in the case of Brahman,—the one noumenal reality—no one has ever *perceived* it as existing anywhere, and so its absence on the floor in front of us does not mean that it exists like a pot elsewhere (and can be perceived as so existing) on earth. Hence, its absence before us cannot be considered as similar to the absence of a pot,—as a case of what is called *samanya-abhava* (ordinary negation). *Secondly*, in every case of ordinary negation there is wanted an *asraya* (abode) for it,—as when we say there is no pot on the floor. But the one Atman is the one universal, all-pervading *Witness* of all forms of phenomena—both of their presence and of their absence anywhere and at any time. This Atman is to be accepted by all on the basis of the Veda, as the

one source of our knowledge. As the Atman is the universal witness of all phenomenal existence (positive or negative) it is also the universal *asraya* (abode) of such existence,—and there is no other, for it is "one only without a second" (*Chhandogya Upanishad*). If we assume that it has another as its witness or abode that will land us in the fallacy of *regressus ad infinitum* (*anavastha*). *Thirdly*, Can Maya (*ajnana*) be considered as a *prior negation* (*prag-abhava*) which ceases when *followed* by the entrance (and the consequent presence) of what did not exist before? In the first place, we cannot admit this so-called *prag-abhava* as a category at all—for it is indistinguishable from the floor on which, for instance, it is said to be experienced. Further, the so-called *prag* (prior) *abhava* (of a pot) can only be related to its co-relative (*pratiyogi*) *subsequent* to our knowledge of the latter,—not *before* such knowledge, as this is a contradiction in terms. Hence the very conception of *prag-abhava* cannot be admitted at all. *Fourthly*, Maya (*ajnana*) cannot be classed under the Naiyayika's category of *Atyanta abhava* (or *sunya*) of which the stock example is 'the horn of a hare'. No conception at all can be formed of it—and it is only a trick of language. The Maya of Vedanta is, as already stated, a phenomenal entity, and therefore stultifiable when the noumenal Atman is realised. But the *atyanta-abhava* (of the Naiyayika) is regarded as *nitya* (permanent) and therefore indestructible. *Lastly*, let us consider the state of deep sleep when there is no dream,—known as *sushupti*. Here we have no experience of sense-objects. Upon waking, however, we feel that we have been in a state of complete ignorance (*ajnana*). This state is clearly a *memory*, and implies a previous *experience*; and therefore a positive fact. *Ajnana*, therefore, is a positive fact of experience,—not a non-entity. In the state of deep sleep, it is a positive experience to the eternal and universal witness,—The Atman.

We thus reach the following conclusion:—The primordial Maya and its manifestation in the objects of the material universe are neither non-existent (*sunya, asat*) like the horn of a hare,—nor are they *nitya* (permanent reality) like the Atman, persisting in all the three states, past, present and future. Still, they are positive in form (*bhava-rupa*) as having a phenomenal existence and are technically known as *sad-asad-vilakshana*, *i.e.*, different from both *sat* and *asat*.

Various questions have been raised and answered with regard to Maya (*ajnana*). We shall refer to them briefly before we conclude this section.

I. When does *Ajnana* take its origin? The answer is, that is *anadi*, beginningless,—*ajanya*, without a cause For, if it had a cause, that again must have a cause, and so we shall be landed in the fallacy of *anavastha* (a *regressus ad infinitum*). Moreover, *ajnana* is like a disease. What we want is a cure. So, we have only to seek a physician who knows, and can apply, the proper remedy. Hence to enter upon an enquiry into its cause is to take up a bootless and foolish errand. To this it may, perhaps, be objected that an investigation into the cause of a disease has often to precede the administration of a proper remedy. The reply is that, in putting forward an analogy, we should not indulge in vague or meaningless generalities. In the present case, the analogy, must be confined to a disease which is definite in its nature and for which we know also that there is a definite and infallible remedy,—for *ajnana* is only to be compared to such a disease.—Or we may compare it more appropriately to darkness in a room which has to be removed before we can find the object we are in search of. What we here need is a light, and no one can be regarded as a sane person who, refusing the aid of a light, starts on the inquiry what is the cause of darkness in the room, when it became dark, &c.

II. *What is Ajnana's Vishaya* (object) *and Asraya* (abode)? According to the Veda, only the Atman is both these. For, it is the one existence, and there is no other. We shall add a further explanation. All ordinary people, when questioned, reply, "I do not know the one true Self (Brahman)". Further, as already stated, in dreamless sleep, there is an experience of *ajnana*,—and, though we do not *seem* to be conscious of it, we must have had an experience of it, as, after waking, every one says,—"I slept soundly, knowing nothing all the while." Hence, we have here clearly a *memory of a positive experience whose object is ajnana*; and it is clear also that such experience of *ajnana* is, and must be due to the eternal witness of the Atman which is of the nature of pure intelligence (*jnana*).

Some hold that as the experience of *Ajnana*—of the fact that we have no knowledge of the one Brahman—is present in the waking state, the Jiva (and not the pure Brahman) ought to be regarded as its abode (*asraya*),—even though the latter (the pure Brahman) is its *vishaya* (object). To this view the reply is that our waking experience itself, like every other experience, is the effect of primeval ignorance (*mula-ajnana* or *mula-prakriti*), with which alone we are here concerned,—and the latter can have no *asraya* (abode) other than the pure Brahman "One only without a

second." *Secondly*, the formation of the Jiva's personality (*ahankara*) is itself due to superposition (*adhyasa*)—or the identification of the Atman with Maya—which we shall next have to deal with; and Ajnana cannot be kept waiting for an abode till the Jiva's personality has come into existence in its own due time in the cycle (*kalpa*) to which he belongs. *Thirdly*, as *ajnana* is the cause of phenomenal bondage for the Jiva, so *jnana* (the realisation of the one self) is the cause of liberation. Both *ajnana* and *jnana* get related, as they must, to the *same* object,—for our knowledge of one object cannot remove our ignorance of another.

To the above observations regarding *ajnana*. some objections are put forward. We shall, for example, refer to two. I. A pot covered by a cloth does not shine to our sense of sight. But the Atman does shine though screened by *ajnana*, though not in its fulness of perfection. II. If the Atman, the *one* knower and enlightener (of the world) is screened by *ajnana*, the existence of *ajnana* itself (and thereby also of the world) cannot be known.—The following *reply* may be put forward *to cover both objections*. (1) Nothing can be decided from the fact that a particular analogy can be adduced against a doctrine. Other analogies may suit and that is enough. Here, we can adduce a better analogy. The eclipsed sun and moon shine, though not in full, even when the shadow is falling on them. Even so, the Atman shines in some measure, even while *ajnana* screens it so as to produce the sense of personality (*ahamkara*) in the Jiva. (2) In the case of the pot above-mentioned, we want *two* external aids to make it shine, *viz.*, the falling of light on it when the cloth is removed, and its contact with our sense of sight. No such aids are needed to make the Jiva shine for us. The *ajnana* which covers the Atman shines itself with the aid of that which it screens but cannot hide in full,—viz., the Atman which ever shines by the glory of its self-effulgence (*svayamprakasa*), while it also illuminates all else that is in the world of phenomena.

REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA*

By A. Srinivasa Pai, B.A., B.L.

In the year 1893 while I was a student reading in the Presidency College, Madras, I had the good fortune of coming into personal contact with Swami Vivekananda. It was shortly before he left for America to attend the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. He was then unknown to fame but his unique personality attracted a considerable number of people—a good proportion among them being students— to his informal talks. I do not recollect seeing at these meetings any of the leaders of Hindu Society in Madras then, but there were students, teachers, second grade officials and vakils. It was after the Swami returned from America in 1897 with a name and a world-wide fame that the leaders and high grade officials and people used to flock in hundreds to listen to his talks and lectures. He was residing then (1893) with Mr. Bhattacharya (a Bengali gentleman, then Deputy Accountant General at Madras) in a house situated at a short distance from the southern end of the Marina. I used to go to this house in the evenings with some fellow students to listen to the Swami. We used to squat in the orthodox fashion very near the Swami on carpets spread on the floor. Vivekananda would smoke while talking. His talk touched on a large variety of subjects. And it was delightful to listen to him.

In those days a knowledge of the ancient Hindu Philosophy and doctrines was far less spread among the English-educated Hindus in Madras than now; and there were also far fewer popular writings on the subject. Our great gods in those days were Mill and Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Leslie Stephen and Haekel. To us theirs was the last word in Philosophy, Politics and Sociology. And so, Vivekananda's expositions—logical and trenchant as they were —came as wonderful surprises on us. We had however no proper grounding to appreciate his expositions at their true worth. And the prejudices of some of us students in favour of the above-named European writers were hard to break through.

Once Vivekananda explained to us how the modern doctrine of evolution had been anticipated by our sage Kapila. On another occasion speaking of a Personal God and Impersonal God, he tried to show how the position of an agnostic or even atheist was really

* These reminiscences are based on the recollections of myself and my younger brother with whom I "compared notes" before recording these recollections.

not one of negation, as they had to believe in continuity—a continuous Principle running through all eternity. The position of the orthodox Christians, he said, was illogical and untenable. An arbitrary and sudden creation of a soul and then its eternal damnation or salvation—it was like "a stick with only one end."

There was plenty of talk on lighter subjects. His own college days and the pranks that he and his fellow students played on some of their professors; how once they struck work and "went away and smoked". Two stories of "the marvellous" which he told us I distinctly remember. One of these was of a blind man whose memory and sense of hearing were exceptionally acute. When the Swami was quite a young boy this blind man had once heard him talk and sing. Years afterwards he came one night to a house where Vivekananda was staying. On hearing the Swami sing he at once recognised the voice and asked whether he was not the boy whom he had heard in such and such a year at such and such a place. This blind man while walking in the streets would clap his hands and listening to the sound would say 'Here on my right is a vacant space 'or 'There on my left is a tall building' and so on. The other story was of a "magician," a man (a Mussalman, if I recollect correctly) who had acquired certain "Siddhis" or supernatural (so-called) powers. A European wanted to test his powers, and one evening they drove together in an open carriage of the European to a street in Calcutta. While they were driving the 'magician' said to the European, "Now ask for anything you want and I shall give you." The European thought for a moment and then said "Give me a bottle of Champagne", knowing that no such thing was in the carriage or anywhere near at hand. The 'magician' stretched out his arm, clutched at something in the air and brought in a bottle of Champagne. Then saying "Now look," he waved his hand towards the right row of shops in the street and all the lights in that row were put out; while the lights in the opposite row were burning as before. Before the people in the street and shops could quite recover from their surprise he waved his hand again and the lights in the right row were relit.

I am reminded of another story he told us while on the subject of the rude and at times insulting behaviour of Europeans in India to 'Natives'. Naturally he spoke with much feeling on the subject as every self-respecting Indian would. Once, it seems, a solicitor in Calcutta was rude and insulting to an Indian Barrister. The leading Indian clients and lawyers held a meeting and re-

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solved to boycott that particular solicitor. "And from the next day," said Vivekananda, with an expressive gesture tilting his thumb towards his lips, "the solicitor had to suck his thumb."

The bare-headed photographs in the book "Swami Vivekananda's speeches and writings," published by Messers G.A. Natesan & Co. give a good idea of the appearance of the Swami. But no photograph or description can give a correct idea of the power of his eyes. They were wonderful. Like the "Ancient Mariner" in Coleridge's famous poem he "held you by the eye". The voice too had an indefinable attraction. Though not ringing and silvery like Mrs. Beasant's in her prime, nor soft and pleasant like Mr. Norton's it attracted you and held you. He could sing beautifully. One evening as we were sitting listening to him a pretty little child—a daughter of Mr. Bhattacharya, I believe,—toddled in. He took the child on his lap and sang a Punjabi song. He observed that the song was attributed to Guru Nanak and told us of its origin. One evening at the time of "Ārati" Nanak went to a temple. The Brahmin priests would not allow him to enter. So, he turned aside and sang this song in which he compares the sky to a silver plate, the stars to little lights—'Niranjans'—in that plate used for "Ārati", the perfumed evening breezes to incense, and so on, reminding us students of Moore's poem which we had read in one of the School Text Books of the time, beginning with the lines :

> "The Turf shall be my fragrant shrine,
> My Temple, Lord, that arch of Thine."

In person Vivekananda was not flabby like many of the Bengalis whom we see, but was sturdy and somewhat thick-set. The complexion was brown with a slight coppery hue.

In manner Vivekananda was natural, unaffected and unconventional. There was none of that solemn gravity, measured utterance and even temper that we usually associate with a sage. At times his manner was somewhat Johnsonian and brusque when he wanted to put down one who had asked a silly question or a question intended to show off one's knowledge. One hot morning (this was after he returned from America to Madras) at the end of a long sitting when many questions had been asked and answered, a somewhat conceited young man asked pompously, "What is the cause of misery in this world, Swami ?" "Ignorance is the cause of misery" blurted out Vivekananda and rose and closed the interview. On another occasion one in the audience pointed out to

the Swami that the view expressed by the Swami on some point of philosophy differed from that of Sri Sankaracharya. "Well", said the Swami, " Sankara was a man, you are a man, and you can think for yourself." An orthodox Pandit appears to have had an interview with the Swami and attempted to show off his learning. Speaking of that interview the Swami said, " The fellow who cannot pronounce 'Jnana' properly has the cheek to criticise my pronunciation of Sanskrit."

On Vivekananda's return to Madras from America in 1897 the public reception given to him was magnificent and the crowds which came to greet him, some of the largest. His first public lecture in Madras cannot be called a success as a lecture. But that was due to the over-enthusiasm of the crowds. It was arranged for, I believe, in a big Circus-tent, but even that was found insufficient to hold the crowds, and the Swami had to come outside and mount a carriage to address the huge concourse in the " Geeta fashion " as he said. He strained his voice to the utmost, gesticulated, but it was all no good. The noise and disorder were great and the lecture had to be given up after a short time. The subsequent lecture in the Victoria Hall on "The sages of india" was a grand success. It was a very impressive lecture marked by a flowing eloquence. When he came to that portion of the lecture which deals with " Rasa Kreeda" or the Love of Gopis to Sri Krishna and explained the true significance of that sublime Love, the expression of his face and especially of his eyes was beatific and soul stirring.

Informal talks in the mornings and answering of questions were arranged for in a pandal put up on the Marina, near the old "Capper-House Hotel," somewhere near the site of the present premises of Queen Mary's College. Now, the leaders of Hindu Society in Madras, big Officials and Vakils and people in hundreds came and we students found it hard to get near to the Swami. One morning a European Lady (a Protestant missionary, I believe) came and spoke somewhat disparagingly of the enforced celibacy of a Sanyasin's life and of the harmful results of the starving of a noble instinct (noble, when rightly regulated). After a short psychological and philosophical explanation of the necessity of celibacy in a Sanyasin (which perhaps was not quite appreciated or understood by the lady), he turned to her and said half-humorously, "In your country, Madam, a bachelor is feared. But here you see they are worshiping me, a bachelor",

Here I may mention that once (was it before he left for America?) the Swami in a communicative mood made a personal confession "I am 30 years old now and have never known a woman."

Once he said to a number of young students in the audience that it was their first duty to cultivate physicial strength and health. "You may have the Geeta in your left hand but have a football in your right." He expressed on one occasion the view that it was the men who were physically weak that yielded to temptations easily, and that those with plenty of physicial vigour and strength were far better able to resist temptations and exercise self-control than the former.

Once referring to himself he said, "There is an 'ustad' under these robes" ('Ustad' an expert gymnast or a teacher of gymnastics).

At this time (1897 after his return from America) Vivekananda was residing in "Castle Kernan" the well known house on the Marina (when I first went to Madras it was known as the 'Ice-House'; then the late Mr. Biligiri Ayyangar bought it as his house; and he named it "Castle Kernan" after Mr. Justice Kernan. There was a "Kernan-maze" in its compound which some of us students used to take pleasure in entering and getting lost).

In "Castle Kernan" during these memorable days some of us students were invited and we ate with Vivekananda. The Swami's appetite was great and he ate heartily. Once pointing humorously to a dish of ice-cream before him he said," I can renounce everything excepting this." At times baskets of fruits sent to him by friends from Bangalore used to arrive. As soon as they would arrive they would be opened and the contents distributed among those present and the Swami also ate.

Sometimes in the early mornings Vivekananda would bathe in the sea opposite to "Castle-Kernan" along with a number of students.

Informal talks were at times held in the rooms of the Triplicane Literary Society. The late Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Rao and a number of other social reformers including my old Assistant Professor of History the late Mr. A. Subba Rao (a sturdy Social Reformer and Agnostic) used to attend. Some of the Social Reformers were snubbed by the Swami and their views and methods criticised. Once when Mr. A. Subba Rao spoke rather disparagingly of the thinking-power and views of our old Rishis, the Swami remarked that Mr. Subba Rao could have no idea of the power of intense meditation which the Rishis had acquired through

long self-discipline, and added "You will be burnt to ashes if you think for half a minute like them."

When one evening the Swami was discoursing on "Faith in God" in the Triplicane Literary Society Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao broke in in a solemn manner, "I have always preached that no nation, no race, no individual who did not believe in God ever became great." At this some of the irreverent young students smiled in an amused manner.

He spoke of his guru Sri Ramakrishna and some of Sri Ramakrishna's apparently mad actions undertaken with a view to kill the 'self' in him, the significance of which many—especially in Europe and America—could not understand. With reference to ordinary American audiences he said, "If I had spoken of these acts to them, they would have thrown me and my guru into the nearest ditch."

When the effect of religious beliefs (Hindu and Christian) on the masses came up for discussion, Vivekananda said, "If like me you had visited the slums of Europe and America and seen how near to brutes the inhabitants of those slums are, and then compared them with our masses in India, your doubts as to the effect of Hindu religious beliefs on the masses would have vanished."

SEEDS OF WAR*

By Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D. D., LL. D.

HOW TO END WAR

The great question for us to consider on Armistice Day is how to end war. It is not easily ended. It cannot be ended without a tremendous struggle. We cannot end it by wishing it ended, or hoping it ended, or praying that it may be ended. It cannot be ended by denouncing it, or hating it, or passing resolutions against it. It cannot be ended unless we quit planting the seeds of war. An inspired apostle once told us that we are living under the law of seed growth. From the dominion of that law there is no escape. 'Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap.' That is a law for nations as well as individuals. Whatsoever a nation sows that shall it also reap. If it sows the seeds of war, it will reap the harvest of blood. That is the kind of universe we are living in, and from the consequence of our sowing there is no escape. Let us think this morning about just a few of the seeds of war.

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* Extracts from a lecture delivered on the eve of the Armistice Day in Broadway Tabernacle, New York City. U. S. A. Reproduced from the *Forward*.

SLANDERING OF OTHER NATIONS

At the head of the list let us place sarcastic and insulting speech about other nations. We do not often realize the tremendous possibility of evil in foolish and hateful words. Journalists of the baser sort in every country plant the seeds of war. A journalist who habitually lies about other nations, and slanders them, ought to go to prison as a traitor to his country and an enemy of the human race. There ought to be a law written on our statute books making the slandering of other nations an act of treason. Statesmen are often reckless in their use of words when they speak of other nations. . . . . Many of us are not at all careful when we speak of other nations. Christians ought above all other people, to be exceedingly careful not to say unkind and unjust things about other countries. Unkind and unjust words embitter and enflame the feelings of the heart, and it is out of these ugly feelings that war at last comes.

RECKLESS LEGISLATION

We should also beware of reckless legislation passed in a haughty and supercilious spirit. Our Asiatic Exclusion Act psssed a few years ago was a shame and a disgrace. The desired end may have been a good one, but the manner in which the law was passed was inexcusable. The same end could have been obtained in a gentler and more courteous manner. There was no excuse for giving needless pain to a sensitive and high strung people which wants nothing so much as to be our friend. Whenever we wound the heart of other peoples, we are planting the seeds of war.

GUNBOAT POLICY IN CHINA

We should cease to follow policies which are provocative of national resentment. We are often reckless as a nation in the ways in which we deal with other nations, especially with those which we regard beneath us. For instance we keep gunboats in some of the rivers and lakes of China. We have a few men-of-war at certain harbours along the Chinese coast. We have no business to have them there. We will not allow China to patrol any of our rivers or lakes with gunboats. We would tear the heavens down in a frenzy of wrath until the last such foreign vessel had been sunk out of sight. Why do we have them in China? Because China is defenceless. China cannot strike us with her fist. Because she is helpless, we impose upon her. We insult her by our gunboat patrols. It is sometimes said that we have gunboats there in order to protect our missionaries. I used to be hood-

winked along with some of you by that specious argument. It was one of the surprises I experienced when I got to China, to discover that our missionaries do not want the gunboats there. They do not ask for naval protection. They want the gunboats to come home. They are not a protection but a menace. The presence of a foreign gunboat is a constant irritation to the Chinese mind. That irritation is becoming an inflammation, and the inflammation is growing year by year. The student body in China is constantly increasing and the students are going to set on fire the whole Chinese people. China will not submit indefinitely to the impertinences and insults of the Christian nations of the West. If we do not bring our gunboats home now, it will not be long before we shall be compelled to bring them home. They are only a few in number, and when China makes up her mind that they shall depart, they will depart. In order to keep them there it would be necessary to send a thousand times more ships, and after we had sent a thousand more, we should be compelled to send another thousand—something that the American people will never consent to do.

THE ORIENT TURNING FROM THE WEST

We are approaching the end of an era. The Chiristian Church has reached a crisis in its career. It cannot go on as it has been going. It has got to become more Christian or cease to claim to be the leader of the world. The greatest living Hindu poet, Tagore has recently said that the Orient at one time reverenced the West, but that reverence had ceased to exist. The Orient now believes the West to be insincere. Our Christian countries are finding it increasingly difficult to present the ideas of Jesus to non-Christian congregations. Orientals have lost faith in Christianity. Christians claim to be follwers of the Prince of Peace. They say that they worship the King of Love. They declare that the Law of Love is the supreme law of the world, that love is the mighteest power in human life, and nevertheless Christian nations go right on preparing for war. Christian nations are fighting nations. They have converted Christianity into a fighting religion. Who created the howitzers? Christians. Who created the submarines? Christians. Who created the tanks? Christians. Who invented the bomb-dropping airplanes? Christians. Who created poison gas? Christians. Who soaked a continent with blood? Christians. No wonder the East is turning away from Christendom, feeling that it is a hypocrite and an enemy. The time has come when the Church of Christ must cut loose from the whole war system. The war system is a

millstone hung around its neck, which, unless it is torn off, will sink the Church into the depths of the sea. The Church of Christ must put its foot down on the whole military policy and programme. We claim to follow Jesus Christ, the Leader who said, 'Put up your sword.' We do not put up our sword. We are proud of our sword. We spend more money on it than on anything else. We make it longer and sharper and deadlier all the time. The time has come when the Christian Church must say to the diplomats and statesmen, 'Put up your sword.' Men cannot serve Christ and Mars. The Church cannot worship Christ and Caesar and Napoleon. The Church cannot follow Christ and Chenghis Chan, and Tamerlane. The Church cannot worship Christ and follow in the footsteps of Tiglath-Pileser and Rameses II. We have done it long enough. The time has come when all that must be ended. We must unitedly work on the technique of peace. We must spend our time and our money in perfecting the machinery of peace. We must seek to make friends of all the nations on the earth. We must prepare ourselves. We must put up lines of defence. Some men speak as though there were only one kind of defence. They assume there is only one way in which security can be obtained. There is only one kind of preparedness. It is a preparedness of guns. It is a defence by guns. It is security obtained by guns. Every intelligent man believes in preparedness, in security, in defence, but there is another kind of defence. Friendship is defence. Friendship secures security. Friendship is a form of preparedness.

FEDERATION OF THE WORLD

In China every Province has two governers, a Military Governor and a Civil Governor. In Fukien, the Province in which Foochow is located, there is a Military Governor who is exceedingly unpopular. He has the reputation of being autocratic and cruel, and he has thousands of soldiers under his command. He defends himself by guns. The result is he is afraid to go out of his house. He goes out but seldom, and then under a heavy guard. When he wants to cross the bridge of ten thousand ages, he orders all traffic across the bridge to be stopped for hours before his arrival. When he comes he is carried in a sedan chair between two lines of armed men. He believes in a defence of guns. I do not know whether he is alive yet, but I should not be surprised to read almost any day of his death. I do not believe he is secure. I have no faith in his kind of defence. The Civil Governor is a Confucian scholar of gentle heart and beautiful spirit. All the

people love him. He can go out of the house any time he pleases. He can ride through the most crowded streets in his sedan chair without fear. He can even walk in the most dangerous sections of the city in perfect safety. He is protected by the loyalty of loving hearts. That is the true defence of a nation. No nation is in the slightest danger which lives its life in the midst of friends. That is the supreme duty of our country—to make friends of all the other countries of the world. We must co-operate with them. We must come into closer fellowship with them.. There must be a federation of the world, and the United States must be a part of it.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

MESSAGE OF THE VEDAS

The Vedas are regarded as the most authoritative scriptures by all sections of the Hindus. They represent the fountain-head of the wisdom of the ancient Aryans. The antiquity of the Vedas is unquestioned. The researches of eminent scholars, like the late Bal Gangadhar Tilak, have proved beyond doubt that in the Rig-Veda we have one of the most ancient, if not the very earliest, records of the civilisation of the Indo-Aryans. And as such the lessons drawn from the Vedas must possess a peculiar value and interest to the followers of Hinduism.

The latest figure in the field of Vedic research is Dr. Abinash Chandra Das of the Calcutta University. Many of our readers may be already familiar with his valuable contribution to the understanding of the Rig-Vedic culture. Presiding over the Veda Sammelana of the Gurukul University Silver Jubilee Celebration held at Hardwar on the 16th of March last, Dr. Das delivered an inspiring address on the message of the Vedas. According to him the Vedic civilisation built up the Aryans into a strong and virile nation; and it was the falling off from the Vedic ideals and slavish imitation of the foreigners that brought about the degeneration and decay of the glorious Hindu race. "If we wish to recover our ancient glory," he remarks, "and resuscitate ourselves as a living and progressive nation, we should make an earnest and organised effort to study the Vedas, the most ancient literature of the Aryans, and assimilate the best points of Vedic culture along with whatever is noble and wholesome in the culture of the West."

According to Dr. Das Aryan culture is indigenous to the Punjab and older than any culture that we know of. Taking his stand on the internal evidences, he repudiates the theory of the Western scholars who have fixed the age of the Vedas between 2000 to 1500 B C. From the same source he concludes that there was a different distribution of land and water in North India during the time when the Vedas were revealed to the Rishis.

The second lesson is that the Aryans were a united people without distinction of so many castes which we find to-day. There was no restriction as to inter-dining and inter-marriage. Even the division into four castes which is mentioned in one 'mantra' of the Rig-Veda (X. 90, 12) Dr. Das interprets as being gradually evolved according to the peculiar tendencies and occupations of men. Even in this stage there is no prohibition as regards inter-dining and inter-marriage. The caste system, if such a name could be used at all, was elastic enough to admit others into its fold. It is pointed out that cooks were usually recruited from the fourth caste, and this custom was continued down to the Epic time and even later. Dr. Das believes that the Aryans were a homogeneous people, and had none of the narrow caste-prejudices which we find to-day working against the social unity.

The third great message is the equal status of women with men possessing the same rights and privileges. There were no infant-marriages, and the maidens chose their husbands. Ladies also could become Rishis like men. Ghosa, Lopamudra and Viswavara composed Vedic hymns. The last performed the duties of a 'Hotri' (a sacrificial priest) also at a sacrifice. The influence of women in domestic, social and political matters were such as to bring forth vigorous and noble progeny. Dr. Das feels much for the present degraded condition of our women and pleads that they should be restored to their former privileges and enlightenment.

The next message of the Vedas is that the Aryans were a democratic people framing their own constitution, electing their own kings, withholding the taxes when the Government failed to discharge its duties and even deposing their kings whenever necessary. After a careful study of the Vedas and the ancient literature and history of India, Dr. Das points out that a spirit of democracy is ingrained in the very nature of the Indo-Aryans.

Another message is that our people have always been sending out missionaries who spread Aryan culture in many a foreign

land. Long before the Buddhistic Missions, the Rig-Vedic Paniks and Vaniks sailed to the then known world in merchant-ships to trade and to spread Aryan culture. They visited the Deccan, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Egypt, China, Japan and probably far off America in subsequent times.

Another message is that we should look to the land as the source of our wealth and support. Our Vedic ancestors were pre-eminently an agricultural people possessing herds of cattle. And they manufactured every article of their consumption. And we too should take ourselves to agriculture in right earnest, adopting a course the present improved scientific methods, and manufacture all the necessaries of our life including our clothing.

The last and the most important message is the grand ideal, placed before the people—viz. to know and realise Brahman, and through Brahman, the solidarity of the human race. Dr. Das observes, "We should learn to see God in everything and everything in God. Our love of God should be as wide as the Universe itself, comprising within its vast compass, not only humanity as a whole, without any distinction of caste, creed or race, but also life in every shape and form; and our mind and soul should be saturated with a world-wide good-will and compassion for all living creatures, such as the great Buddha felt and taught to mankind, and such as our 'Rishis' and 'Sannyasis' sacrificed and are still sacrificing everything to cultivate and realise."

WASTAGE OF INDIA'S MAN-POWER

Nation is individual writ large and on the vigour of its manhood, no doubt lies its strength and virility. In all its social and political activities it is the nation's man-power that counts most. Social values, be they ethical or religious, aesthetic or economic, are all created by men. Hence the conservation of the nation's man-power and its transformation into creative forces are of utmost importance to its welfare. In his thought-provoking article on "Wastage of India's man-power" contributed to the April number of the *Modern Review*, Mr. Rajani Kanta Das has revealed to us with facts and figures the piteous condition of India to-day.

As a nation in the matter of average longevity we are in the lowest rung of the ladder. In the census of the world we have the smallest number of men over sixty living a retired and peaceful life.

We have the largest death role in the world, and in no other country there is such a rate of infant mortality as ours. It is interesting to note how this sad state of affairs goes hand in hand with the literacy of the people. Only 12% of the children of the school going age get some sort of primary or elementary education. And 92% of India's population sunk in ignorance without any provision for training and education, badly fed, badly clothed, live and die in insanitary surroundings! Any one would stare aghast to hear that 124 millions of India's children, that is 39% of her population have no scope at all for developing their physical and mental faculties and that 65·5 millions of her total male population pass their days without sufficient work, in sickness and disease. Speaking of India's women, the writer observes that the labour or energy resources of 60 millions out of 86 millions "might be said to be lost." Indeed such wastage of human energy is unparalleled in the history of any country in the world. The writer further points out that the average activity for India's man-power is only eleven years as against three times eleven and three for the rest of the world. "The most important problem of India," concludes Mr. Das, "is that of the conservation and utilisation of her human resources. It is the development of the physical strength and mental faculty of her population upon which depend her national prosperity, political development and social progress." The article ought to be an eye-opener to all lovers of humanity in any part of the world.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF JOURNALISTS IN INDIA.

The responsibilities of journalists in India towards the continuance of concord and amity have been emphasised recently by the public utterances of many leaders of thought. Mahatma Gandhi laid his finger on the true cause of communal riots when he ascribed the martyrdom of Swami Shraddhananda to the mad frenzies of some of our irresponsible newspapers which missed no opportunity to create rupture and revel in hatred. While addressing the Indian Journalist Association, Mr. K. Natarajan of Bombay also struck the same note. He dwelt on the use and abuse of editorials and headlines the *suggestio falsi and suppressio veri* that very often taint the news as given, and appealed for a controlled and chastened management of news and views. To those who realise the appalling commercialisation of the press in the West and the usurpation of private judgment and public opinion by a capitalist junto, the future of Indian journalism is of serious consequence. The press, like everything else, is but an instrument of service, a means to-

wards a higher end—the upholding of our Dharma, the unfoldment of our Destiny. Any deviation from Indian ideals of peace and brotherhood will spell disaster. Everywhere we see around us the effects of blindness to the obligations of power, of littleness in great places In the midst of this deplorable state of affairs the Indian Journalist Association can do much to elevate and purify the ideals of the Indian press.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Vedanta Philosophy—By Sridhar Majumdar, M. A. Published by Surendranath Bhattacharya, M A., Professor of Sanskrit, B. N. College, Bankipore. Pp. 770—XXIV. Price Rs. 5.

We congratulate the author for bringing out this valuable English translation of the Brahma Sutras of Badarayana. The volume under review contains the original sutras, their word for word meaning, explanatory quotations from the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita etc., with their English translations as also notes based on Nimbarka's commentary—the 'Vedānta-pārijāta-Saurava'—and this is doubly welcome as the commentator was one who tried to reconcile the view-points of Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva and others. The author, however, has noted the views of Sankara in instances of material difference. He has added at the beginning of each section a lucid sketch which has made the work of the student easier. The style of the book is simple and clear. An appendix of twenty-four pages explaining the difficult Sanskrit terms, used in the book has greatly enhanced its value. The author has rendered a positive service to the students of Vedanta by bringing out this translation.

The Pythagorean Way of Life—By Hallie Watters. Published by Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 70.

This Publication is a thesis submitted by the Author to the Leland Stanford Junior University. It is the brief history of one of the most important movements of antiquity—the Pythagorean Movement. A short sketch of the great philosopher, scientist and religious reformer, his rule of life handed down by oral tradition with other moral precepts current in his school as transmitted to us in the "Golden Verses" of Lysis, and a running commentary of the latter form the main theme, while an Introduction and a select Bibliography completes the booklet.

Balak—Hindi Monthly, published by Rama Krishna Briksha Sharma Binipuri, Laheria Saria, Behar.

We have received the Magh special issue of the 'Balak' at the commencement of its second year's career. Its useful and informing articles like 'Guru Nanak,' 'What should we eat?' 'Northern India at the time of Gautama the Buddha,' 'Afghanisthan,' with its fun and frolic makes it a charming reading specially for the young.

NEWS AND REPORTS

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA SOCIETY, PORTLAND, OREGON

We are glad to receive the first Annual Report of the Vedanta Society. It is a very hopeful record of the spread and influence of the sublime teachings of the Vedanta in America. The Society was opened as a result of the interest created by Swami Prabhavananda's visit to Portland in October 1925. "Starting with a good number of members," says the report, "now after the lapse of only one year's time the hall is beginning to seem small and there is much talk among the members of more commodious quarters—of a temple to be the Society's very own."

Swami Prabhavananda held two evening classes each week during the year, besides giving private lessons to members and non-members who came to him at other hours. He also gave a week of special lectures which brought several new members to the Society. During the winter he delivered a course of eight lectures on the Gospel of St. John in the Christian Bible. Another series of lectures is being conducted at present by the Swami on the Apocalypse of St. John, the Divine. These are proving to be of great interest and helpfulness to the students, "because they show clearly and logically that the same eternal, cosmic truths so wonderfully set forth in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita are also behind the veils of the Apocalypse—one of the mos mystically obscure books in the world to-day.

Swami Prabhavananda visited Tacoma and Seattle in the State of Washington thrice during the year and gave a number of lectures at both these places. In consequence there has been expressed a great desire for the opening of new centres with Swamis in charge. "There is a crying need in the West," says the report, "for the pure teachings of Vedanta. Many souls are hungering and thirsting for the truth. Most earnestly are we praying to the Divine Mother to send to this country more Swamis to spread further afield the message of the Master."

Special services to commemorate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda were held at the Society on the 30th January last. In the course of an impressive discourse Swami Prabhavananda spoke feelingly on the universal ideal of religion as embodied in the life of the Swami and also portrayed vividly his great work or the welfare of humanity.

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna was also celebrated at the Centre with great devotion and enthusiasm on the 5th March. Swami Prabhavananda opened the Morning Service with chant and prayer. After the singing of the "Hymn to the Divine Mother," the students spoke one after another on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna in well-chosen words. In the afternoon the students met to partake of "The Master's Birthday Dinner" given by one of the devotees. In the evening the Swami referred to the little every day things of Sri Ramakrishna's life, his simple tastes and love for fun, his great tenderness and love for mankind, his life of wonderful purity and Divine realisation. He brought the celebration to a close with an invocation that found its response in the hearts of all.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA SEVASRAM, TAMLUK, MIDNAPUR

Swami Jnaneswarananda and Swami Bhaswarnanda of the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, went to Tamluk and delivered a series of lectures to the public, students and ladies of the town. Several meetings were also organised at Natsal, Kalyanchak, Nimtouri, and Raghunathbari. The Chandipur Sri Ramakrishna Math also invited the Swamis and organised a public meeting there. Swami Jnaneswarananda conducted Bhajana at all these places visited. The lectures and Bhajans were well attended and much appreciated.

WESTERN INDIA VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, BOMBAY

At the extraordinary general meeting of the members of the Western India Vivekananda Society held on Saturday the 9th April at the Bombay Students' Brotherhood Hall, under the chairmanship of Mr. M. R. Jayakar, President of the Society, it was unanimously resolved to amalgamate the Society with the Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Khar. The following executive committee for conducting the public activities of the Ashram was also elected at the meeting; Mr. M. R. Jayakar, President; Mr. K. Natarajan and Swami Vishvananda, vice-Presidents; Mr. G. P. Murdeshwar and Swami Sambuddhananda, Secretaries: Messrs. R.K. Prabhu and R. Krishna Iyer, Assistant Secretaries; Mr. F. J. Ginwalla, Treasurer; Drs. A. L. Nair and Rajaballi Patel, Messrs. J. K Mehta. K. N. Mahale, B. N. Motiwala, M. J. Mehta, Thakurdas Munim, Jesthara m Sunderdas, S. C, Banerjee and K. S, Krishna Iyer, members,

THE LATE MR. S. VEERARAGHAVACHARIAR

It is with great sorrow that we have to record the death in his sixty-fourth year of Mr. S. Veeraraghavachariar—one of the most devoted friends of the Ramakrishna Mission at his residence in Triplicane on Wednesday, the 20th April, 1927. He was healthy and cheerful till 8 O'clock the previous evening when he was struck down with paralysis, became unconscious, and passed away peacefully in the early hours of the next morning. Mr. Veeraraghavachariar was one of the blessed few that came under the inspiring influence of Swami Vivekananda before his historic visit to America in 1893; and he continued till the last day of his life to be a staunch and unselfish devotee of the Master and his Mission. In 1921 he made over by an absolute gift his spacious house in South Mada Street, Triplicane, to the Mission to be utilised for charitable purposes. Strong and self-reliant, genial and generous, he lived his life dedicated to the cause of the civic and and religious welfare of his fellowmen in the city. In him the Mission has lost a true friend who zealously stood by it and rendered invaluable help to it ever since its inception. Mr. Veeraraghavachariar has passed away. But he will ever be remembered by all who came into close contact with him as one who possessed a most loving heart, sturdy independence and spotless integrity of character.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA'S DEPARTURE FOR AMERICA

At the earnest request of the members of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, California, the authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission have deputed Swami Madhavananda to take charge of the centre in place of the late Swami Prakashananda who suddenly passed away in February last. The Swami left Calcutta on the 28th April by S. S. Talamba of the B. I. S N. Company, which is bound for Japan. Unexpectedly the steamer halted for a few hours at the Madras harbour, and the Swami took the opportunity of paying a surprise visit to the Sri Ramakrishna Math, and the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home to the great delight of the brothers of his Order.

Swami Madhavananda fulfilled very ably the responsibilities of the President of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, for nearly a decade till last month when he handed over his charge to Swami Vireswarananda—the former head of the Advaita Ashrama Branch in Calcutta. To the readers of the Ramakrishna Mission literature Swami Madhavananda is well known as the translator of the Vivekachudamani and Sri Krishna and Uddhava, as the editor of the Hindi Monthly, The Samanvay, and editor and publisher of a large number of the works of the "Himalayan series." He is one of the most qualified and tried workers of the Mission to be sent to the West. And we most sanguinely hope that with his great spirit of renunciation and devotion, experience and erudition he will be able to make a deep impression on the minds of the American devotees, and prove to be of immense service to all who will look up to him for spiritual light and guidance.